







100

Maryland League

# OBJECTIONS TO WOMAN SUFFRAGE ANSWERED

BY

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## Why Should Women Vote.

THE reasons why women should vote are the same as the reasons why men should vote—the same as the reasons for having a republic rather than a monarchy. It is fair and right that the people who must obey the laws should have a choice in choosing the lawmakers, and that those who must pay the taxes should have a voice as to the amount of the tax, and the way in which the money shall be spent.

Roughly stated, the fundamental principle of a republic is this: In deciding what is to be done, where everybody's interests are concerned, we take everybody's opinion, and then go according to the wish of the majority. As we cannot suit everybody, we do what will suit the greatest number. That seems to be, on the whole, the fairest way. A vote is simply a written expression of opinion.

In thus taking a vote to get at the wish of the majority, certain classes of persons are passed over, whose opinions for one reason or another are thought not to be worth counting. In most of our states, these classes are children, aliens, idiots, lunatics, criminals and women. There are good and obvious reasons for making all these exceptions but the last. Of course no account ought to be taken of the opinions of children, insane persons, or criminals. Is there any equally good reason

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why no account should be taken of the opinions of women? Let us consider the reasons commonly given, and see if they are sound.

### **Are Women Represented?**

*Women are represented already by their husbands, fathers and brothers.*

This so-called representation bears no proportion to numbers. Here is a man who has a wife, a widowed mother, four or five unmarried sisters and half a dozen unmarried daughters. His vote represents himself and all these women, and it counts one; while the vote of his bachelor neighbor next door, without a female relative in the world, counts for just as much. Since the object of taking a vote is to get at the wish of the majority, it is clear that the only fair and accurate way is for each grown person to have one vote, and cast it to represent himself or herself.

### **Men and Women Different.**

American men are the best in the world, and if it were possible for any men to represent women, through kindness and good will to them, American men would do it. But a man is by nature too different from a woman to be able to represent her. The two creatures are unlike. Whatever his good will, he cannot fully put himself in a woman's place, and look at things exactly from her point of view. To say this is no more a reflection upon his mental or moral ability than it would be a reflection upon his musical ability to say that he cannot sing both soprano and bass. Unless men and women should ever become just alike (which would be regrettable and monotonous), women must either go unrepresented or represent themselves.

### **Women Not Represented in the Laws.**

Another proof that women's opinions are not now fully represented is the lack in many states of humane and pro-

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protective legislation and the poor enforcement of such legislation where it exists; the inadequate appropriations for schools; the permission of child labor in factories, and in general the imperfect legal safe-guarding of the moral, educational and humanitarian interests that women have most at heart. In many of our states, the property laws are more or less unequal as between men and women. A hundred years ago, before the equal rights' movement began, they were almost incredibly unequal. Yet our grandfathers loved their wives and daughters as much as men do today.

### **Is "Influence" Enough.**

*If the laws are unjust, they can be corrected by women's indirect influence.*

Yes, but the indirect method is needlessly long and hard. If women were forbidden to use the direct route by rail across the continent and complained of the injustice, it would be no answer to tell them that it is possible to get from New York to San Francisco by going around Cape Horn.

### **Mother and Child.**

The slowness with which some of the worst inequalities in the laws are corrected shows the unsatisfactoriness of the indirect way. In most states, a married mother has literally no legal rights over her own children, so long as she and her husband live together. Here is a case which actually happened, and which might happen today, in 34 out of the 46 states of the Union:

A Chinaman had married a respectable Irish-woman. When their first baby was three days old, the husband gave it to his brother to be taken to China and brought up there. The mother, through the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, appealed to the courts. But the Judge promptly decided that the husband was within his rights. He was the sole legal owner of the baby; he had the sole legal right to say what should be done with it. For more than half a



century, the suffragists of the United States have been trying to secure legislation making the father and mother joint guardians of their children by law, as they are by nature; but thus far the equal guardianship law has been obtained in only 14 states and the District of Columbia. Massachusetts got it in 1902, after 55 years of effort by Massachusetts women. In Colorado, after women were given the right to vote, the very next Legislature passed an equal guardianship law.\*

In Massachusetts, the State Federation of Women's Clubs, the Woman's Relief Corps, the State W. C. T. U., the Children's Friend Society and 64 other associations united in asking for the bill. The only society of women that has ever ranged itself definitely on the wrong side of this question is the "Massachusetts Association Opposed to the Further Extension of Suffrage to Women." It circulated for years, under its official imprint, a leaflet in defence of the old law which gave the husband the sole control of the children.

In Massachusetts, in 1902, the laws of inheritance between husband and wife were made equal; but it had taken more than half a century of work to secure this self-evidently just measure. The experience in many other states has been similar. The roundabout way is almost always long and slow.

### **The Ignorant Vote.**

*It would double the ignorant vote.*

Statistics published by the National Bureau of Education show that the high schools of every state in the Union are graduating more girls than boys—some of them twice or three times as many. The whole number of boys in attendance at public high schools in the United States in 1905-6 was 305,308; of girls, 417,384. Because of the growing tendency to take boys out of school early in order to put them into business, girls are getting more schooling than boys. Equal suffrage would increase the proportion of voters who have received more than a merely elementary education.

\* Laws of 1895, p. 186.



### The Foreign Vote.

*It would double the foreign vote.*

During the three years ending June 30, 1904, there arrived in the United States 2,223,166 immigrants. Of these only 664,527 were women, less than one third.\* There are in the United States more than three times as many native-born women (32,467,041) as there are foreign-born men and foreign-born women put together (10,341,276).\*\* Equal suffrage would largely increase the proportion of native-born voters.

The foreign vote is objectionable only so far as it is an ignorant vote. Intelligent foreigners, both men and women, are often very valuable citizens. On the other hand, the ignorant foreign immigrants who come here are fully imbued, both men and women, with all the Old World ideas as to the inferiority and subjection of women. It is not until they have become pretty thoroughly Americanized that they can tolerate the idea of women's voting. The husbands are not willing that their wives should vote, and the wives ridicule the suggestion. Experience shows that until they have become Americanized, the foreign women will not vote. And, after they have become Americanized, why should they not vote, as well as any one else?

### The Criminal Vote.

*To the vote of every criminal man, you would add the vote of a criminal woman.*

The vicious and criminal class is comparatively small among women. According to the latest tabulated prison statistics of the United States Census (those for 1904), Alabama had in her state prison and state and county penitentiaries, 1,796 men and 94 women; Arizona, 293 men and one woman; Arkansas, 769 men, 23 women; California, 2,359 men, 24 women; Colorado, 848 men, 16 women, Connecticut, 460 men,

\* Report of Commissioner General of Immigration.

\*\* Census of 1900, Vol. II, pp. 17, 18.



14 women; Delaware, 155 men, 5 women; District of Columbia, 41 men, 5 women; Florida, 1,075 men, 30 women; Georgia, 2,243 men, 82 women; Idaho, 139 men, 3 women; Illinois, 2,383 men, 36 women; Indiana, 792 men, no women; Iowa, 832 men, 28 women; Kansas, 2,279 men, 31 women; Kentucky, 1,872 men, 71 women; Louisiana, 1,296 men, 35 women; Maine, 178 men, 5 women; Maryland, 1,389 men, 113 women; Massachusetts, 1,824 men, 39 women; Michigan, 948 men, one woman; Minnesota, 620 men, 12 women; Mississippi, 1,021 men, 28 women; Missouri, 2,091 men, 72 women; Montana, 436 men, 8 women; Nebraska, 322 men, 5 women; Nevada, 91 men, no women; New Hampshire, 157 men, 3 women; New Jersey, 1,402 men, 69 women, New Mexico, 240 men, 7 women; New York, 5,392 men, 313 women; North Carolina, 631 men, 43 women; North Dakota, 149 men, 2 women; Ohio, 1,587 men, 41 women; Oklahoma, 22 men, no women; Oregon, 332 men, 2 women; Pennsylvania, 1,966 men, 35 women; Rhode Island, 388 men, 63 women; South Carolina, 632 men, 28 women; South Dakota, 193 men, 3 women; Tennessee, 1,575 men, 62 women; Texas, 4,073 men, 117 women; Utah, 171 men, 2 women; Vermont, 259 men, 15 women; Virginia, 1,478 men, 68 women; Washington, 791 men, 4 women; West Virginia, 982 men, 32 women; Wisconsin, 608 men, 12 women; Wyoming, 189 men, 3 women.

In the prisons of the United States as a whole, including those for all kinds of offenses, women constitute only five and one-half per cent. of the prisoners, and the proportion is growing smaller.

Equal suffrage would increase the moral and law-abiding vote very largely, while increasing the vicious and criminal vote very little. This is a matter not of conjecture but of statistics.

### **The Bad Women's Vote.**

*The bad women would outvote the good ones.*

In America the bad women are so few, compared with the good ones, that their votes could have little influence. Mrs.



Helen Gilbert Ecob, wife of a prominent clergyman who was for some years a pastor in Denver, writes:

"The bad women represent, in any city of the United States, but an infinitesimal proportion of its population, and the vote of that class in Denver is confined practically to three precincts out of 120."

Mrs. Sarah Platt Decker, of Denver, ex-president of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, and also for some years president of the Colorado State Board of Charities and Correction, writes:

"Does not the vote of the disreputable class of women overbalance the better element? No; the women of the half-world are not willing to vote. They are constantly changing their residences and their names. They do not wish to give any data concerning themselves, their age, name or number and street; they prefer to remain unidentified."

Ex-Gov. Warren, of Wyoming, sums it all up when he says, in a letter to Horace G. Wadlin, of Massachusetts:

"Our women nearly all vote; and since, in Wyoming as elsewhere, the majority of women are good and not bad, the result is good and not evil."

### **Don't Understand Business.**

*A municipality is a great business corporation. Men, by the nature of their occupations, know more about business than women, and hence are better fitted to run a city or a state.*

Women have a vote in every other corporation in which they are shareholders. George William Curtis said: "A woman may vote as a stockholder upon a railroad from one end of the country to the other; but, if she sells her stock and buys a house with the money, she has no voice in the laying out of the road before her door, which her house is taxed to keep and pay for."

Moreover, it is not true that a man's experience in his own business teaches him how to carry on the business of a city. Some years ago, a fashionable caterer was elected to the



Massachusetts Legislature, and was appointed a member of the committee on filling up the South Boston flats. Another member said to him scornfully, "What do you know about filling up flats, anyway?" The caterer answered quietly, "That has been my business for twenty years." The answer was good, as a joke; but, as a matter of fact, what had his experience of planning dinners taught him about the way to turn tide-mud into solid ground? What does the butcher learn from his business about the best way to pave a street, or the baker about the best way to build a sewer, or the candle-stick maker about the best way to lay out a park, or to choose school teachers or policemen, or to run a city hospital? Does a minister learn from his profession how to keep the streets clean, or a lawyer how to conduct a public school, or a doctor how to put out a fire? A man's business, at best, gives him special knowledge only in regard to one or two departments of city affairs. Women's business, as mothers and housekeepers, also gives them special knowledge in regard to some important departments of public work, those relating to children, schools, playgrounds, the protection of the weak and young, morals, the care of the poor, etc. For what lies outside the scope of their own experience, men and women alike must rely upon experts. All they need, as voters, is sense enough and conscience enough to elect honest and capable persons to have charge of these things.

#### **Division of Labor.**

*The growth of civilization is marked by an increasing specialization and division of labor. Woman suffrage would therefore be a step backward.*

The growth of civilization increases the division of labor as between individuals, but lessens it as between sexes. One woman no longer spins and weaves, and manufactures the clothing for the men of her family, at the same time carrying on all the housework and in addition making butter, cheese and candles, as our great-grandmothers did. This work is now sub-divided among a number of specialists. On the other,



hand, in the old times women were excluded from almost all the occupations of men. Housework and sewing were practically the only ways open to them to earn a living. To-day, out of more than 300 trades and professions followed by men, women are found in all but three or four.

But this objection about the sub-division of labor is really irrelevant. Voting is not labor in the sense of a trade or profession. The tendency of civilization has been to a greater and greater specialization of labor, but not to a closer and closer restriction of the suffrage. On the contrary, that has been steadily extended. The best results are found not where public affairs are left in the hands of a small class of "professional politicians," but where the largest proportion of the people take a keen interest and an active part in their own government.

#### **Would Lose Their Influence.**

*Women would lose their influence.*

What gives a woman influence? Beauty, goodness, tact, talent, pleasant manners, money, social position, etc. A woman who has any of these means of influence now would still have them if she had a vote, and she would have this other potent means of influence besides. There is a story of a prisoner who had been shut up for many years in a dungeon, getting sunlight only through a chink in the wall. He grew much attached to that chink. At last his friends came and offered to tear down the wall. His mind had become weakened and he begged them not to do it. If they destroyed the wall, he said, they would also destroy the chink through which he got all his sunlight, and he would be left in total darkness. If he had his wits, he would have seen that he would have all the sunlight he had before, and a great deal more besides. A woman after enfranchisement would have all the personal influence she has now, and political influence in addition. One thing is certain: Every vicious interest in this country, to which women are hostile, would rather continue to contend



with women's "indirect influence" than to try to cope with women's vote.

### **Cease to Be Respected.**

*Women would cease to be respected.*

Mrs. Sarah Platt Decker, of Denver, writes: "Under equal suffrage there is a much more chivalrous devotion and respect on the part of men, who look upon their sisters not as play-things or as property, but as equals and fellow-citizens."

Mrs. K. A. Sheppard, president of the New Zealand Council of Women, says: "Today a young New Zealander in his teens no longer regards his mother as belonging to a sex that must be kept within a prescribed sphere, but as a human being, clothed with the dignity of all those rights and powers which he hopes to enjoy within a few years."

Mrs. A. Watson Lister, secretary of the Woman's National Council of Australia, says:

"One striking result of equal suffrage is that members of Parliament now consult us as to their bills, when these bear upon the interests of women. The author of the new divorce bill asked all the women's organizations to come together and hear him read it, and to make criticisms and suggestions. I do not remember any such thing happening before, in all my years in Australia. When a naturalization bill was pending, one clause of which deprived Australian women of citizenship if they married aliens, a few women went privately to the Prime Minister and protested, and that clause was altered immediately. After we had worked for years with members of Parliament for various reforms, without avail, because we had no votes, you cannot imagine the difference it makes." (Woman's Journal, Feb. 13, 1904.)

### **Would Make Women Partisans.**

*Women can do more good now than if they had a vote, because now they are non-partisan. If they became voters, their non-partisan influence would be lost.*

Women continue to be non-partisan after they have the ballot,



and it gives them more power to secure the good things which the women of all parties want.

Prof. Henry E. Kelly, formerly of the Iowa State University, now practicing law in Denver, says in an open letter to State Senator A. H. Gale, of Iowa, that he went to Colorado opposed to equal suffrage, but has been converted by what he has seen of it. Prof. Kelly adds:

"Experience clearly shows that women's interest cannot be aroused in mere partisan strife. Their interests center around questions affecting education, public cleanliness, public morality, civic beauty, charities and correction, public health, public libraries—and such subjects as more intimately affect home life, and conduce to the prosperity of the family. Men lose sight of these important considerations in the scramble of partisan warfare for office, but women will not see them obscured by anything."

Ellis Meredith of Denver, writes:

"There has never been a party measure espoused by women in the Colorado Legislature. The women of all parties want the same things, and have worked for them together, in perfect harmony. They wanted a pure-food law, and secured one from the last Legislature, in line with the national legislation. They wanted civil service reform, and have obtained that, so far as the officers of the state institutions are concerned. During the last Legislature, an attempt was made to take the control of the State Bureau of Child and Animal Protection away from the Colorado Humane Society, and to create a political board. Every federated woman's club in the state besieged its senators and representatives to vote against the bill, and the vice chairmen of the state central committees of the two chief political parties (both of them women) went together to different members of the Legislature to enter their protest. Men understand that in Legislative matters, when they oppose the women, they are opposing practically all the women, and the great independent vote of the state." (Woman's Journal, Aug. 31, 1907.)



### Opposition of Women.

*Women in large numbers are organizing against suffrage. The majority are opposed to it and the majority ought to rule:*

Mrs. Julia Ward Howe says:

"The organized opposition among women to suffrage is very small compared with the organized movement of women in its favor. Out of our 46 states only four have Anti-Suffrage Associations. Tiny anti-suffrage 'committees' exist in four states more. There are Suffrage Associations in 33 states and several territories.

"In New York, at the time of the last constitutional convention, the suffragists secured more than 300,000 signatures to their petitions; the anti-suffragists, only 15,000. The women suffrage petitions presented to the recent constitutional convention in Michigan bore 175,000 signatures. There were no petitions on the other side. In Chicago, not long ago, 97 organizations, with an aggregate membership of more than 10,000 women, petitioned for a woman suffrage clause in the new city charter, while only one small organization of women petitioned against it. In Maine, Iowa, Kansas, in short, in every state where petitions for suffrage and remonstrances against it have been sent to the Legislature, the petitioners have always outnumbered the remonstrants, and have generally outnumbered them 50 or 100 to one. On the only occasion when the government took an official referendum among women on the subject (in Massachusetts in 1895), the women's vote was in favor of suffrage 25 to one.

"Most women are as yet indifferent on the suffrage question; but, of those who take any lively interest in it either way, the great majority are in favor. This has been demonstrated wherever the matter has been brought to a test." (Woman's Journal, Aug. 1, 1908.)

### Already Overburdened.

*Women are already overburdened. A woman would not have time to perform her political duties without neglecting higher duties.*



Mrs. Alice Freeman Palmer says: \*

"How much time must she spend on her political duties? If she belongs to the well-to-do class, and hires others to do her work, she has time for whatever interests her most—only let these interests be noble! If she does her own housework, she can take ten minutes to stop on her way to market and vote once or twice a year. She can find half an hour a day for the newspapers and other means of information. She can talk with family and friends about what she reads. She does this now; she will then do it more intelligently, and will give and receive more from what she says and hears. If she does this reading and talking, she will be better informed than the majority of voters are now.

"The duties of motherhood and the making of a home are the most sacred work of women, and the dearest to them, of every class. If casting an intelligent vote would interfere with what only women can do—and what failed in, undermines society and government—no one can question which a woman must choose. But it cannot be shown that there are any large number of women in this country who have not the necessary time to vote intelligently, and it can be argued that study of the vital questions of government would make them better comrades to their husbands and friends, better guides to their sons, and more interesting and valuable members of society. Women of every class have more leisure than men, are less tied to hours of routine; they have had more years of school training than men. All this makes simple the combination of public and higher duties."

#### **Women and Office-holding.**

*If women vote, they must hold office.*

When we say that women would be eligible to hold office, what do we mean? Simply that if a majority of the people in any place would rather have a woman to hold a certain

\* Objections to Woman Suffrage Answered by College Women.



position than any one else, and if she is willing to serve, they shall be allowed to elect her. Women are serving as officials already; some of the women most prominent in opposing equal suffrage have been holders of public office. The late president of the "Massachusetts Association Opposed to the Further Extension of Suffrage to Women" (Mrs. J. Elliot Cabot) was for years a member of the school board of Brookline, and also Overseer of the Poor. Yet that association, in its published documents, objects to equal suffrage on the ground that "suffrage involves the holding of office, and office-holding is incompatible with the duties of most women." Suffrage does not involve office-holding by the majority of women, but only by a few; and there are always some women of character and ability who could give the necessary time. Women, as a class, have more leisure than men.

In the enfranchised States there has been no rush of women into office, and the offices that women do hold are mainly educational and charitable. In Wyoming women have had full suffrage for 39 years, yet no woman has ever been a member of the Legislature. Neither Colorado, Utah, nor Idaho has ever had more than three women in the Legislature at one time.

### **Ballots and Bullets.**

*If women vote, they ought to fight and do police duty.*

If no men were allowed to vote except those who were able and willing to do military and police duty, women might consistently be debarred for that reason. But so long as the old, the infirm, the halt, the lame and the blind are freely admitted to the ballot box, some better reason must be found for excluding women than the fact that they do not fight. All men over 45 are exempt from military service, yet they vote. Col. T. W. Higginson says: "It appears by the record of United States Military Statistics that out of the men examined for military duty during the civil war, of journalists 740 in



every 1,000 were found unfit; of preachers, 974; of physicians, 680; of lawyers, 544.\*

"Grave divines are horrified at the thought of admitting women to vote when they cannot fight, though not one in twenty of their own number is fit for military duty, if he volunteered. Of the editors who denounce women suffrage, only about one in four could himself carry a musket; while, of the lawyers who fill Congress, the majority could not be defenders of their country, but could only be defended."

Again, it must be remembered that some woman risks her life whenever a soldier is born into the world. Mrs. Z. G. Wallace, of Indiana, from whom Gen. Lew Wallace drew the portrait of the mother in "Ben Hur," said: "If women do not fight, they give to the State all its soldiers." This ought in all fairness to be taken as an offset for the military service that women do not render. As Lady Henry Somerset says, "She who bears soldiers does not need to bear arms."

### Can Laws Be Enforced?

*Laws could not be enforced unless the majority of legal voters represented the majority of possible fighters.*

But thousands of male non-combatants are already admitted to the ballot box, and there is no certainty at any election that the majority of voters represents a majority of possible fighters. No trouble of this kind has resulted from equal suffrage in practice. The laws are as well enforced in the enfranchised States as in adjoining States where women have no vote.

Where women have school suffrage their votes occasionally turn the scale, but there is never any attempt to install the defeated candidates by force. Where women have the full ballot, they have often defeated bad candidates for higher offices, but no riotous uprising has ever followed. This particular objection is a libel on American manhood.

\* Medical statistics of the Provost General's Bureau quoted by Col. T. W. Higginson in "Common Sense about Women," page 365.



### **Will It Increase Divorce?**

*It will lead to family quarrels and increase divorce.*

Full suffrage was granted to the women of Wyoming in 1869. During the twenty years from 1870 to 1890, divorce in the United States at large increased about three times as fast as the population. In the group of Western States, omitting Wyoming, it increased nearly four times as fast as the population. In Wyoming it increased only about half as fast as the population. "An ounce of experiment is worth a ton of theory."

A father sometimes turns his son out of doors for voting the wrong ticket, but among American men this is rare. Where such a case does arise, it is to be met by educating the domestic despot, not by disfranchising all the members of the family but one. A couple who are sensible and good-tempered will not quarrel if they are once in a while unable to think alike about politics. A couple who are not sensible and good-tempered are sure to quarrel anyway—if not about politics, then about something else.

### **The Question of Chivalry.**

*It will destroy chivalry.*

Justice would be worth more to women than chivalry, if they could not have both. A working girl put the case in a nutshell when she said: "I would gladly stand for twenty minutes in the street car going home, if by doing so I could get the same pay that a man would have had for doing my day's work." But women do not have to stand in the street cars half as often in Denver as in Boston or in New York. Justice and chivalry are not in the least incompatible. Women have more freedom and equality in America than in Europe, yet American men are the most chivalrous in the world.

### **Known By Its Enemies.**

*It would increase the corruption of politics.*

Those who thrive upon the corruption of politics do not



think so. The ignorant, vicious and criminal vote is always cast solidly against equal rights for women.

### Too Emotional.

*Women are too emotional and sentimental to be trusted with the ballot.*

Mrs. E. T. Brown, at a meeting of the Georgia State Federation of Women's Clubs, read a paper in which she said:

"You tell us that women are not fitted for dealing with the problems of government, being too visionary and too much controlled by sentiment.

"Now it is very true of women that they are largely controlled by sentiment, and, as a matter of fact, men are largely controlled by sentiment also, in spite of their protesting blushes. Was it logic that swept like a wave over this country and sent our army to protect the Cubans when their suffering grew too intense to be endured even in the hearing? Is it shrewd business calculation that sends thousands of dollars out of this country to feed a starving people during the ever-recurring famines in unhappy India? Was it hard common sense that sent thousands of American soldiers into what looked like a death-trap of China in the almost baseless hope of rescuing a few hundred American citizens? Do not men like Washington, Lincoln, Jefferson and Lee live in the hearts of American men, not alone for what they did, but still more for what they dreamed of? The man who is not controlled by sentiment betrays his friends, sells his vote, is a traitor to his country, or wrecks himself, body and soul, with immoralities; for nothing but sentiment prevents any of these things. The sense of honor is pure sentiment. The sentiment of loyalty is the only thing that makes truth and honesty desirable, or a vote a non-salable commodity.

"Government would be a poor affair without sentiment, and is not likely to be damaged by a slightly increased supply."



### What is the Unit?

*The political unit is the family.*

The childless widower, the unmarried boy of 21, and the confirmed old bachelor of 90 have votes; the widow with minor children has none. Under our laws the political unit is not the family, but the male individual. The unequal number of grown persons in different families would make it impossible to treat the family as the political unit.

### Women's Small School Vote.

*The smallness of women's school vote shows that they would not use the full ballot.*

The size of men's vote is just in proportion to the size of the election. At presidential elections it is very large, at State elections much smaller, at a municipal election smaller still, and at school elections, wherever these are held separately, only a fraction of the men turn out to vote. The smallness of the woman's school vote is regrettable, but it is only a new proof of the truth of Mrs. Poyser's immortal saying: "I am not denying that women are foolish; God Almighty made them to match the men!"

In Kansas women were given school suffrage in 1861. Their vote was small. In 1887 they were given full municipal suffrage. Their vote at once became much larger, and has increased at successive elections.

In Colorado women were given school suffrage in 1876. Their vote was small. In 1893 they were given the full ballot, and on January 31, 1899, the Colorado Legislature declared by a practically unanimous vote of both Houses that "during this time (the preceding five years) women have exercised the privilege as generally as men."

The women's school vote has completely disproved the fear that the bad women would be the first to rush to the polls. In answer the prediction that the best women will not vote,



Col. Higginson says: \* "In Massachusetts, under school suffrage, the complaint has been that *only* the best women vote."

### Will Women Vote ?

*Women will not vote or will cease to vote after the novelty has worn off.*

In Wyoming, women have had full suffrage since 1869. The Wyoming Secretary of State, in a letter to Miss Alice Stone Blackwell, of Boston, says that 90 per cent, of them vote. (*Woman's Journal*, May 6, 1905.)

The Colorado Secretary of State, in a letter to Mrs. Charles Park of Boston, says that 80 per cent. of Colorado women register, and about 72 per cent. vote. (*Woman's Journal*, Aug. 20, 1908).

The Chief Justice of Idaho and all the Justices of the State Supreme Court have signed a published statement that "the large vote cast by the women establishes the fact that they take a lively interest." (*Woman's Journal*, Aug. 20, 1908.)

In Australia, at the last Federal election, 628,235 men voted and 431,033 women. (*Progress*, December, 1907.)

When woman suffrage was granted in New Zealand in 1893, the estimated number of women in the country was 139,915. Of these, 109,461 registered to vote; and the number of women voting has increased at each triennial Parliamentary election since. In 1893, 90,290 women voted; in 1896, 108,783; in 1899, 119,550; in 1902, 138,565; in 1905, 175,046. (Mrs. K. A. Sheppard, President New Zealand Council of Women, in "Woman Suffrage in New Zealand.")

The majority of the women had never asked for suffrage, in any of these places.

### A Growing Cause.

*Opposition to woman suffrage is growing. In Oregon a larger proportional vote was cast against the suffrage amendment in 1908 than in 1906 or 1900.*

\*The Nonsense of It.



There are now five States in which woman suffrage has been submitted to the voters more than once, at intervals of some years. In four of the five, the latest vote was the most favorable to woman suffrage; in one, it was the other way.

In Colorado, when woman suffrage was submitted the first time, it was defeated; the second time, it was carried.

In Kansas, the first time, it received only 9,100 votes; the second time, it received 95,302.

In the State of Washington, the first time the majority against it was 19,386; the second time, it was only 9,882.

In South Dakota, the first time, the adverse majority was 23,610; the second time it dropped to 2,285.

Since on their latest vote four States show a gain for woman suffrage, while only one shows a retrogression, it is clear that growth of the cause is the rule, and that the result in Oregon was due to exceptional local circumstances. Which ought to carry the more weight, four States or one?

### **The Oregon Vote.**

*The increased adverse vote in Oregon was due to the Anti-Suffrage Association formed by Oregon women, and to the bad results of equal suffrage in the neighboring States of Idaho and Colorado.*

Oregon is the only State where a woman suffrage amendment has been submitted more than twice. There it has been submitted four times. Its first submission was in 1884, before any Anti-Suffrage Association had been formed, and before either Idaho or Colorado had granted the ballot to women. At that time it received a smaller proportional vote than it has ever received since. In 1884 it was defeated by a vote of 28,176 to 11,223—almost three to one. In 1908 the vote against it was 58,670 to 36,858—much less than two to one.

### **The Test of Experiment.**

*It works badly in practice.*

Women now have the full ballot in Colorado, Wyoming,



Utah, Idaho, New Zealand, Australia, Finland and Norway. They have municipal suffrage throughout England, Scotland, Ireland, many of the English colonies, Sweden and Denmark. In some of these countries they have had it for generations.

In all these places put together, the opponents thus far have not found a dozen respectable men who assert over their own names and addresses that it has had any bad results.

This is the more remarkable in view of the fact that the active Anti-Suffrage Associations in New York and Massachusetts have been for years diligently gathering all the adverse testimony they could find.

On the other hand, scores of the most highly esteemed men and women in the equal suffrage States testify that the results are good.

In Wyoming, women have had the full ballot for 39 years. For the last 20 years, the advocates of equal suffrage have had a standing challenge, inviting its opponents to find, in all Wyoming, two respectable men who will assert over their own names and addresses that it has had any bad results whatever. The opponents have thus far failed to respond.

### **Doubling the Vote.**

*It would only double the vote without changing the result.*

If letting women sing in church merely doubled the volume of sound, it would still be a good thing, because it would double the number of persons who had the lung exercise and the inspiration of joining in a good hymn and it would make the chorus stronger. If equal suffrage merely doubled the number of voters, it would still do good, because to take an interest in public affairs would give women mental stimulus and greater breadth of view; and it would also bring to bear on public problems the minds of an increased number of intelligent and patriotic citizens. But the great advantage of women in music is that they add the soprano and alto to the tenor and bass. If women were exactly like men, equal suffrage would merely double the vote. But women are different from



men; and women's voices in the State, like women's voices in the choir, would be the introduction of a new element. This is recognized even by opponents, when they express the fear that equal suffrage would lead to "sentimental legislation."

Men are superior to women along certain lines, and women superior to men along certain others. The points of weakness in American politics at present are precisely the points where women are strong. There is no lack in our politics of business ability, executive talent, or "smartness" of any kind. There is a dangerous lack of conscience and humanity. The business interests which appeal more especially to men, are well and shrewdly looked after; the moral and humanitarian interests, which appeal more especially to women, are apt to be neglected.

### **Not a Natural Right.**

*Suffrage is not a natural right.*

It is hard to define just what a "natural right" is. Dr. James Freeman Clarke said: "If all women were forbidden to use the sidewalk, and they complained of the injustice, it would be no answer to tell them that it was not a natural or inherent right, but one given by society, and which society might therefore control as it saw fit. A great many rights are given by society, of which, however, it would be manifestly unjust to deprive either sex."

### **Too Many Voters.**

*We have too many voters already.*

This only means that we have too many voters of the wrong kind. If to increase the number of voters were an evil in itself, every woman who becomes the mother of half a dozen sons would have done harm to her country. But if all six grow up to be good voters she has conferred a benefit on her country. So she has, if five of them become good voters and only one a bad voter. Woman suffrage would bring in at least five good voters to one bad one.

It is often said that we have too many immigrants. We



mean we have too many immigrants of an undesirable kind. We all rejoice when we hear of a large influx from Finland or some other country whose people are considered especially desirable immigrants. We want them to offset those of less virtuous and law-abiding races. The Governor of one of the enfranchised States writes of woman suffrage: "The effect of this increase in the vote is the same as if a large and eminently respectable class of citizens had immigrated here."

### **Would Unsex Women.**

*It will turn women into men.*

The differences between men and women are natural; they are not the result of disfranchisement. The fact that all men have equal rights before the law does not wipe out natural differences of character and temperament between man and man. Why should it wipe out the natural differences between men and women? The women of England, Scotland, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand and our own equal suffrage States are not perceptibly different in looks or manners from women elsewhere, although they have been voting for years.

### **Women Do Not Want It?**

*Whenever the majority of women ask for suffrage, they will get it.*

Every improvement in the condition of women thus far has been secured not by a general demand from the majority of women, but by the arguments, entreaties and "continual coming" of a persistent few. In each case the advocates of progress have had to contend not merely with the conservatism of men, but with the indifference of women, and often with active opposition from some of them.

When a man in Saco, Me., first employed a saleswoman, the men boycotted his store, and the women remonstrated with him on the sin of placing a young woman in a position of such "publicity." When Lucy Stone began to try to secure for married women the right to their own property, women



asked with scorn, "Do you think I would give myself where I would not give my property?" When Elizabeth Blackwell began to study medicine, the women at her boarding house refused to speak to her, and women passing her on the street held their skirts aside. It is a matter of history with what ridicule and opposition Mary Lyon's first efforts for the education of women were received, not only by the mass of men, but by the mass of women as well.

In eastern countries, where women are shut up in zenanas and forbidden to walk the streets unveiled, the women themselves are often the strongest upholders of these traditional restrictions, which they have been taught to think adds to their dignity. The Chinese lady is as proud of her small feet as any American anti-suffragist is of her political disabilities. Pundita Ramabai tells us that the idea of education for girls is so unpopular with the majority of Hindoo women that when a progressive Hindoo proposes to educate his daughter, it is not uncommon for the women of his family to threaten to drown themselves.

All this merely shows that human nature is conservative, and that it is fully as conservative in women as in men. The persons who take a strong interest in any reform are generally few, whether among men or women, and they are habitually regarded with disfavor, even by those whom the proposed reform is to benefit.

Many changes for the better have been made during the last half century in the laws, written and unwritten, relating to women. Everybody approves of these changes now, because they have become accomplished facts. But not one of them would have been made to this day, if it had been necessary to wait till the majority of women asked for it. The change now under discussion is to be judged on its merits. In the light of history, the indifference of most women and the opposition of a few must be taken as a matter of course. It has no more rational significance now than it has had in regard to each previous step of women's progress.







